

THE
PRIMITIVE CHURCH
(OR BAPTIST)
MAGAZINE.

No. CCCII.—FEBRUARY 1, 1869.

Essays, Expositions, &c.

THE DONATISTS.

BY DR. EVANS.—THE SUBSTANCE OF A LECTURE TO THE STUDENTS AT BURY.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to form an accurate estimate of the principles and character of this large and influential body of dissidents from the so called Catholic church. Like all other separatists, from popular forms of religious organisations and dogmas, they had to bear the misrepresentations of their adversaries. Much of the information we possess, in the main, is borrowed from their early opponents: and succeeding writers have not diminished the dark colours in which their history has been drawn. They have not sought, in most cases, to separate fact from fiction, the influence of passion, prejudice, and exaggeration from truth. A certain class of writers in modern times hold them up to the indignant gaze of the Christian world, as most reckless of principle, as influenced by the wildest enthusiasm, as disturbing the peace of the church to gratify some of the worst feelings of our nature, and a disappointed ambition. We can understand all this and estimate it at its true value. Our own body has passed through all this. Our principles have been caricatured by men morally incapable of understanding them; our aims have been represented as blasphemous and destructive of piety and virtue, and our communion as the very hot bed of corruptions, and ruinous to souls. All this, and more than this, has been uttered by men, pampered by the world, luxuriating in wealth and this world's pleasures, and utterly unworthy of the profession they have usurped. We have been designated the Donatists of modern times. The solution of much of this, in both cases, arises from the simple fact that we are dissidents from the popular faith, and have to bear the penalty of separation from corruption and worldly power. Secular Christianity always demands a large tax from conscience. The fact is, the Donatists from the first, were a large and influential body of separatists from the popular faith, surrounded by a not less powerful body of adversaries, who were, during the protracted controversy, sustained by all the influence of the secular power. The one had attachment to truth, with the loss of character, of property, with exile and martyrdom in adhering to it; the other had popular favour, the influence of the Imperial power, with wealth and ease as their reward. Had we space, and were this the time and place, it would be an interesting task to compare the history of the early English Baptists with what we know of the Donatists. The parallel, in many striking points of view, would be complete. But this would lead us too far from our design. We can only give a sketch, not a history.

If we are to form our opinion of the moral state of the North African churches, from what we know of the Carthaginian one, their corruptions had made sad and large inroads on the purity of its communion and the simplicity of its worship. These stand before us, in the letters of Cyprian, with great prominence. It was the chief one in wealth, in number, and ministerial influence amongst the many which existed in the province. Judging of the rest from this, the conclusion is inevitable. The same source of evil which Cyprian deplored would be common, and had not materially lessened since his death. The simple teaching of the Divine word had been incorporated with practice which lowered the standard of moral excellency, and made a mere conformity to creeds and forms, instead of the cultivation of the sincere and holy life of the soul, the great mark of true discipleship to Christ. The great African martyr had already laid the foundation of the great apostasy. No man of his time urged with greater force and constancy the sacerdotal character of the ministry than he. The Episcopate was clothed with a power unknown to Paul and his brethren, which robbed the Christian brotherhood of its freedom, and laid the foundation upon which Rome still builds its anti-Christian temples. The rites and ceremonies had been multiplied, the marks of feebleness and decay, instead of the freshness and power of a living faith in the one sacrifice and priesthood of Christ; the sanctity of bones and rags, the dependence on the intercession of departed saints, and other superstitions, impaired their dependence on the intercession of the Saviour, enfeebled true piety, and weakened every barrier against the inroads of the corruption of their nature and the influence of the world.

It is true efforts had been made to check this, but in vain Cyprian and others had aimed at the destruction of the fruit—but the root was untouched. They sought the removal of the effects but no remedy was applied to the causes. These were left to augment their power and multiply their influence. Severe laws were passed against those who fell from their steadfastness in times of persecution, especially against the Ecclesiastics. "The several churches," says Townsend, and we quote him because he was an Episcopalian and adverse to the Donatists, "maintained just and salutary jealousies over their ministers. They required them to be firm in resolution as well as holy in life. They believed that deficiency in the virtues of the priesthood cancelled the execution of the commission which had been granted in ordination; and also that the authority to ordain ceased with his apostasy or upon his relapsing in the time of danger."* Neander puts it in another form—"It is certain that the opinion was still prevailing with many in the North African church which had maintained its ground from the time of Cyprian, that the validity of all sacerdotal acts depended on the subject and character of the person who performed them, and that therefore they were valid only in cases where they were performed by members of the true Catholic church; that consequently a sacerdotal act performed by an excommunicated person was wholly without force."† These facts are important and lie at the foundation of the whole dispute. Attention to them will throw light on the whole subject.

It was a question of discipline with the Donatists and not one of dogma. Much the same cause operated here as in the case of Novatian and produced the separations in Rome. Of this there can be no doubt. The Bishop of Milevitanus, one of their strong opponents, says, "The Ecclesiastical management is one and the same with you as with us. Though men's minds are at variance, the sacraments are as one. And we may say we believe alike—are sealed with one and the same seal; no other were baptised than you, nor otherwise were ordained than you are. We read the Scriptures alike, we pray to the same God. The Lord's Prayer is the same with us as with you."‡ This clears them from the charge of heresy.

The facts are simple. In the Diocletian persecution not only were the places

* Townsend's Eccles. and Civil Hist. Vol. I. 233.

† Eccles. Hist. III. 247.

‡ Quoted by Wall Infant Bap. p. 106.

of Christian worship closed and demolished, the ornaments and vessels seized, but all copies of the sacred Scriptures were to be given up and burnt. Those who obeyed this latter order were called *Traditors*; they were considered infamous, and not restored to the communion of the church on their repentance without a long and austere penance.* Many bishops had fallen and had surrendered the Holy Volume into the hands of their adversaries, and in an Episcopal gathering about 305 or 6, some of these confessed their guilt and absolved one another. A little after this the Bishop of Carthage died, and three candidates aspired to succeed him. The lot fell upon Cœcilianus, and he was, without waiting for the arrival of other Prelates from Numidia, with unseemly haste set apart with the usual ceremonies by Felix, Bishop of Aptungia, "himself," says Du Pin, "a Traditor."† The Numidian bishops hearing of this, to the number of seventy arrived at Carthage, accused the newly elected prelate of irregularity and infringement of Ecclesiastical law and ordained Majorinus in his stead. In this, as in most early religious disputes, the people were divided, some adhering to Cœcilianus, and the remainder uniting with his rival. Circular letters were despatched to all the churches in the province informing them of the facts and inviting their concurrence in the course which they had adopted. Majorities are not always right, but it is probable that seventy men, uniting in an action, with no apparent motives in the decision to which they had come must have felt that they were right. Be this as it may, not only was the Carthaginian church divided, but those of Africa also on this matter. The death of Majorinus about four years after his elevation opened the way for Donatus, a man of distinguished talents, of impassioned eloquence, of great decision, and ready and energetic action. He was in every way fitted for his position. From the first he had been the soul of the party, and his followers in their admiration of him designated him "The Great." From this illustrious leader, it is all but certain, the name of the sect was taken.

Another element was now thrown into this controversy. Constantine, on his elevation to the purple, and his professed conviction of the Christian faith, lavished the wealth of the Empire on the bishops and their friends. Northern Africa in distress must participate in his bounty. Probably the distress it was intended to relieve arose in part from the severity of the persecution, and in part as it affected the objects of his liberality from the separation which had taken place. About three thousand pounds were entrusted to Cœcilianus and his friends for exclusive distribution amongst the members of their flocks. Eusebius has recorded the edict, and it runs thus:—"In so much as it pleased us to minister some for expense sake, unto some certain ministers of the oppressed and most holy religion throughout every province of Africa, Numidia, and Muritania; I have sent letters unto Ursus, the renowned lieutenant of Africa, and signified unto him that he should cause 3000 folles of silver, to be told unto thy fidelity. Therefore as soon as thou hast received the said sum of money, see the same distributed amongst the aforesaid, according to our writ sent by Hosius. And forasmuch as I understand that some troublesome persons were disposed to prevail, by some lude corruptions the people of the most holy and Catholic church, I give them to understand that I gave forth such injunctions in the presence of Anilinus the lieutenant, and Patrisius the governor's vicegerent, that among all other things they should strictly have due regard hereof, and that they should in no wise permit such a thing to fall out. Wherefore if thou seest some such men to persist in their folly, without any more advice have recourse unto the said Judges, and make them privy thereof; that they consider them as I charged them when present."‡ No one can be blind to the influence which prompted this. The Donatists, if possible, must be crushed no matter by what means. The edict of Milan promised toleration to all, but his spiritual advisers had no hesitancy in inducing him to violate his word.

(To be continued.)

* Townsend vol. i. p. 235.

† Du Pin. Lib. x. c. vi.

‡ Eccl. History, Lib. v. c. vi.

CLOSE COMMUNION.

THE word "close" seems to be very obnoxious to many good Christian people. Is not the spirit of the gospel preëminently free and hospitable? Are not its invitations extended to all? "Whosoever will, let him come." Are not Christians regarded as one great brotherhood? Very true. And yet the gospel, with all its freeness, is a very close religion. In a proper sense, it is exclusive and intolerant. The church is a close corporation. Heaven is the same. A church may be made too "broad," and heaven too free. In that case, the one is not the church of God, nor the other the heaven of the Bible. God puts up bars. He demands conditions. He institutes pre-requisites. He is a very precise God; by no means as charitable as many of his creatures would have him, or declare him to be. The communion of the saints, on earth and in heaven, is close communion. It is restricted to a certain class. And this is stigmatised by some as narrow and uncharitable.

But in all these cases the simple question for every real Christian should be—Is the restriction greater than the Bible authorises? and for this particular case in hand. Is "close communion" closer than the Bible? The mere fact of its being "close," makes nothing against it, unless it also makes against the church and heaven, for they too are "close." It would seem that this were hardly a point to be argued with a Christian man, and yet the word "close" carries with it tremendous force, appealing not only to the prejudices of the mind, but to the very best feeling of the renewed heart, to that love and charity which are the essence of the gospel. Good people, who do not carry their logic, if they have any, into the subject, are imposed upon by a word upon which those who know better often play to purpose. The word "close" has thus become associated with narrowness, bigotry, uncharitableness, party spirit, and decides the question as by a summary process, without any further hearing. You bring forward your reasons, but a hue and cry is instantly raised about your closeness, and the matter is settled. You are put down at once, and judgment pronounced against you. What headway can you make against such a current?

If people can once be brought to see that "close" is not so bad a word after all; that the Bible applies it to some of the most precious things; and that the question is not whether the communion is close—which with many precludes further investigation—but whether it is closer than the Word of God, and the practice of the Primitive church, and the nature of the ordinance itself; if people can be brought to this reasonable point, then we may have hope that our Baptist position will be really understood and appreciated, even where it is not adopted. It will then be confessed that we have something to say in our defence, and that the cry of "close communion" carries with it no force at all against us. When men are willing to come to the Bible for a calm and dispassionate consideration of the question, we have no fears for the result. We are willing to abide the issue.

THE GOLDEN CALF.

"And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it."
—Exodus xxxii. 20.

BEFORE the golden calf was made, the Israelites had witnessed many indications of the power, the wisdom and the goodness of God. They had been preserved on the fatal night, when the destroying angel passed through the land of Egypt; destroying the first-born of the Egyptians. They had been delivered from the bondage of Egypt. Their fetters had been snapped. They had been brought through the Red Sea by an outstretched arm, while the hosts of the Egyptians

had sunk beneath the swelling wave. They had been fed with the manna, and had drunk from the stream which flowed from the smitten rock. They had been guided by the pillar of a cloud by day, and by the pillar of a fire by night. They had witnessed the terrible scene at Mount Sinai, when the law was given—the thundering, the lightning, the thick cloud, and the sound of the trumpet. Notwithstanding all these miraculous displays of God's existence, power, and love; when Moses was called up into the mount, where he remained but forty days and forty nights; before he came down, some of the people had become idolaters. Aaron had stripped them of their ornaments, and at their request, had made a golden calf, and they had actually worshipped it. "These be thy gods oh Israel," they said, "which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." They danced, they sung, they shouted and adored the work, the product of their own hands. How wicked, how hateful to God, how detestable, how worse than heathenish was this conduct! So striking and clear were the evidences which they had witnessed of the existence of God, that their idolatry could not be the result of a want of evidence, it was the result of their depraved and deceitful hearts. They might have seen, in former days, the idolatrous Egyptians worshipping the ox; but this did not justify them. They had been better instructed than the Egyptians. They had heard the holy law, which says, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth," and they had declared with one voice, "All that the Lord have said will we do." Now they are dancing round a golden calf. Sensibility staggers when we find "that God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven" (Acts vii. 42), as the ancient Britons were permitted to worship the sun, the moon, and the star Saturn. But to worship the image of a silly, dirty, irrational calf, is beyond all expression, intolerable, and degrading. Moses was commanded to go down from the Mount, and when "he saw the calf, and the dancing, his anger waxed hot." He cast down the tables of stone which contained the law, and brake them beneath the Mount. Whether he did thus to show that they had broken the law or not; it shows his anger, and his utter displeasure. The words above indicate what he did with the calf.

I.—Let us look at the design of this calf, as it illustrates what the Creator claims. It was designed, though wickedly, to be an object of devotion. Whether it was to be worshipped, irrespective of any real or supposed invisible being; or it was designed, as the Papists say of their images, and the heathens say of their idols of wood and stone, to remind them of, or to lead them to some invisible being, the sin was equally great. The law forbids the worship of the likeness of anything that exists. The living God requires the homage of the soul. "God is a spirit, and they who worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." The father seeketh such to worship him.

1. That God is worthy of the adorations of his creatures, may be seen from his consummate perfections. One of his names is, "I AM." It has been "I AM," in the past. It is, "I AM," now. It will be "I AM" in the future throughout eternity. He is the Creator. The sun, the moon, the stars, and this globe, upon which man lives and acts, are all the production of His hands. He is Omnipotent. "He upholdeth all things by the word of his power." The planetary worlds are sustained by Him. He maketh his sun to shine. "He sends the rain on the just and on the unjust." He causes the grass, the corn, and the flowers to spring forth, and he sends the changing seasons. He is omnipresent, and omniscient. That is, He is everywhere present, and knows all things. "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there," says the Psalmist. "If I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me" (Psalm cxxxix. 8, 10). His presence fills immensity, and he is cognizant of every act that man performs, of every word which he expresses, and of every thought that possesses his mind. He is perfectly pure.

"The heavens are not clean in His sight." The holy angels veil their faces before Him, sensible of their inferiority. He is the God of justice and love. "He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords." These attributes shine in all His dealings with his creatures.

2. That He is worthy of the adoration of man, is seen in what he has done, and what he is still doing.

He is the God of providence. He rules the day and the night. He causes the shrubs, the trees, and all nature to appear. He blesses us with food, raiment, and habitations in which to dwell. He gives us sensibility, reason, health, strength, life, being, and all the friends, comforts, and treasures that we enjoy. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." He is the God of grace. He has not only given to us the book of nature which shows his power, his wisdom, and his goodness; but he has given to us his inspired Book. It contains His law, which is a transcript of his nature. It reveals His Son Jesus Christ whom he hath given. Jesus has obeyed the holy law, he has died the substitutionary death of the cross. He has effected the great work of human redemption. Now, the Holy Spirit comes to renew, to guide, and to sanctify us. God sustains his people all through the journey of life; and raises them to the crown of everlasting life. What could He have done, that he has not done, or that he has not engaged to do? His goodness is indescribable in its magnitude; and extends from everlasting to everlasting.

"This, this is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;
His love is as great as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end."

3. God justly claims and deserves all the praise and adoration that man can give. If a man could create a little globe, and place it in some part of the universe. If he could put upon it a machine that could walk, speak, and labour, would he not claim the right of having that machine employed for his own pleasure. The Patent Law of England recognises the principle. He who brings out an invention has a right to an advantage from it. Man has been created by the Almighty. Saints have been redeemed by Him. They are doubly His. Their time, their reason, their speech, their influence, their treasures, and all that they possess, are to be so employed that he may be honoured. He is to be supreme, to reign in the heart. He is to be served. His honour is to be the great business of life. He is to be praised and honoured, as the God of providence and grace. "Ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a price, the precious blood of Christ."

II.—The golden calf indicates that some of the Israelites were idolaters; and it indicates the possibility now.

It is a mistake to suppose that idolatry is confined to what are called "heathen lands." That about which a man thinks the most, that which is supreme in his heart, that for which he is prepared to make the greatest sacrifices, and that which he honours and adores, is unquestionably his god. Some of the Israelites presented their golden ear-rings—things which to them were most valuable—upon which the calf was made. When it appeared, they danced and shouted around it, and ascribed their deliverance from Egypt to it. That they became idolaters, we are obliged to admit. It is possible that there may be idolaters now. They may neither worship Juggernaut, nor kneel before a crucifix. They may, in theory, acknowledge the true and living God; and yet be practical idolaters. A darling child may be an idol. That it is proper for a parent to love, to watch over, to provide for, and to instruct his child, is admitted; but a parent may think more of his child than he does of God. He may do more for his child, than he has the inclination to do for God. He may be speaking the praises of that child perpetually. All his power, his strength, his skill, and all his wealth may be employed to promote the honour, the happiness, and the exaltation of the child. Let such a parent solemnly

ask, am not I an idolater? A man's idol may be his belly. Compared with its gratification, everything may sink into nothing. All his offerings and adorations are presented to this idol. It is supreme. He labours, struggles, and contrives, that he may eat and drink. He has no offering to present to Jehovah. The calf was an idol of gold. Gold may be a man's god now. It may be supreme in his estimation. Everything may sink into nothing compared with it. All his strength of mind and body may be employed to secure it. Every sacrifice of time, strength, health, character, and reputation, may be made if only the gold can be acquired. Religion and honour may all fly, if the one thing needful, the gold can be secured. There can be but one idea as to what the god of such a man is. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." A man's idol might be something else. It might be a wife, a business, a house, a garden, a horse, a field, or a country. Anything to which a man's supreme affections go, is his god. He may not dance and shout about it; but he estimates it most highly. Such a man is as truly an idolater, as if he kneeled before a crucifix.

III.—Look at the results of idolising the golden calf to the Israelites. They appear in the chapter mentioned above. Moses "took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel to drink of it." How provoking, how humbling, and how mortifying it would be to them, to see the object to which they had been paying their homage, ground to powder and cast into the water! If the calf could not protect and save itself, it could not do much for them.

1. The golden calf became a source of grief to the children of Israel. After the small dust of it had been cast into the water, they had to drink it. It is supposed that the golden dust swam upon the water. Here the great truth comes out, that any idol to which a man may be devoted will surely give him grief. If a darling child should be the object of his devotion, it may be called away by the hand of death. Then, how great the distress, how agonizing the feeling, how profuse and scalding the tears! Many a parent has felt that the departed child has occupied a position too high in the affections, and that God has taken away the idol. One parent who had been bereaved of a darling child, said to the writer: "The Lord saw that I thought too much of the child, and he took it away." Under such circumstances, a parent has to drink the water of grief. If a man's god should be his belly, he must suffer. His sumptuous dainties, and his intoxicating drinks, may all be swept away, or he may be removed from them. Then, he too has to drink the bitter cup. If gold should be a man's idol, he too must suffer. Who can live in days like these, without perceiving that gold is a very precarious and destructive thing upon which to depend? Much more is it so, when it becomes an idol. Ships are wrecked at sea; banks reputed to be in a flourishing state, stop; houses, barns, stacks, and mills, are levelled with the ground by tempest or reduced to dust by fire. Many a man, in whose heart the living God is supreme, is, at such scenes distressed. How harrowing then, must they be to a man, whose gold is his idol! If his god be not taken away from him, he must be soon taken away from it. He may soon find that his mortal frame is becoming weaker, feebler, and death is looking him in the face. He is to be taken away from what is most dear to him—his gold. How bitter is the cup which he has to drink? If a man's idol be anything else, it will surely give him grief. God only can satisfy an immortal mind.

2. If there be no repentance, there will be destruction to all idolaters. Three thousands of the Israelites were slain because of the golden calf (Exod. xxxii. 28). The tribe of Levi appears to have been free from idolatry, at least, from the golden calf. How terrible was the destruction. Idolatry is one of the sins which excludes a man from heaven (Gal. v. 20. 21). Idolatry dishonours God and robs him of his glory. Let God be worshipped.

"O thou, my soul forget no more,
The Friend who all thy misery bore;
Let every idol be forgot,
But O! my soul, forget him not."

Little Leigh.

A. S.

SHARP REBUKE FOR THOSE WHO DESERVE IT.

BY T. W. MEDHURST, GLASGOW.

Titus i. 13, and ii. 15.

We have frequently been saddened with the thought, that professed Christians who are "diligent in business" are often far from being "servent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Prov. xxii. 29; Rom. xii. 11). The man who is "diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." The men who are truly "not slothful in business," are those who ever have the fear of the great God before their eyes, and are as diligent in the business of serving God in the worship of his sanctuary, as they are in the business of the mart for the support of their families. We never find a small matter keeping a diligent man from his shop, or from his counting-house; neither should a small matter keep the diligent Christian from the worship of his God on "the first day of the week." How is it then, that all the accredited members of our churches are never present at the right time, without exception and "with one accord," (Acts ii. 1), "in one place," on "the Lord's day," for the purpose of worshipping God? Is it not because they are more anxious to serve themselves than to serve their God? Is it not because they are more anxious for the welfare of the body than for the salvation of the soul? If this be not so, we know not how to account for the trivial excuses made "with one consent" (Luke xiv. 18), by our hearers for their non-attendance, at the hour of public worship on the Sabbath day. Listen to the absurd excuses too often made, and "judge ye" (1 Cor. x. 15), whether such are usually sufficient to keep a man from his daily avocation. Says Mr. Jones, "I felt very poorly, so I thought I would stay at home and nurse myself." Says Mrs. Brown, "My husband had a headache, and I just kept at home to keep him company." Says Mr. Robinson, "I took a trip down the water to get a breath of fresh air." Says Sarah Martin, "I went to hear Mr. L., because I heard so much about him, and felt a wee bit curious to hear what he was like." Says Mr. Delicate Constitution, "It was really too hot, and our chapel is so badly ventilated." Says Mrs. Apt-to-make Excuse, "It was too cold, and I kept in the house all day." Says Miss Gaudy, "It looked like rain, and I was afraid of spoiling my clothes." Says Mr. Alexander, "It was too windy, I really couldn't face it." Says Mr. Clear-sighted, "It was too foggy for me to venture out." Says Mr. Robust, "It was very dark, so I staid at home and read to the wife and little ones." Says Mr. Industrious, "I was very tired, and as I didn't get the shop shut till twelve o'clock, I thought I would lie a little longer and rest myself." Says Mr. Polite, "A friend called in to see me, and I couldn't very well leave him." Says Mrs. Kindly, "I hadn't seen my sister so long, that I thought I had better run over and have an hour's chat with her." And thus they all with one consent begin to make excuse, forgetting that Jesus has said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," (Matt. vi. 6, 24).

If it be right to go up to the house of God on "the Lord's day," it is right to do so with spirit and regularity. If it be right to worship God in the public assembly, it is wrong to allow a trivial matter to keep you from doing what is right. If it be right not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is," (Heb. iv. 14), then it must be wrong to be absent from

the house of God, except when prevented from being present by absolute necessity. If we are exhorted to "hold fast our profession," (Heb. iv. 14), we should do so constantly, and not by fits and starts. Nothing should ever keep us from the house of God on Sunday, which would not keep us from our shops, counting-houses, or works on Monday, or prevent our going on the excursion on Tuesday, or attending the market on Wednesday, or visiting our friends on Thursday, or going for a sail on Friday, or from taking a stroll on Saturday. Surely there is nothing unreasonable in this. If the excuses we make for not attending our churches or chapels on the "first day of the week," would not be counted sufficient to hinder us in fulfilling our business or pleasure engagements on the other six days, such excuses must be wrong, and false. "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say." Would you stay either from business or pleasure, because you had a slight headache, or it was hot, or cold, or windy, or foggy, or wet, or dark? You know you would not. Then do not insult God, hurt your minister's feelings, and injure the prosperity of the Lord's work by absenting yourself from his sanctuary, when it is at all possible for you to be present.

Inasmuch as the Christian ministry is an ordinance of God, designed "for the perfecting of the saints," and "for the edifying of the body of Christ," (Eph. iv. 11, 13), it is obviously the duty, as well as the privilege of all church members, to attend regularly on the ministrations of their "pastors and teachers."

It is not enough considered that it is the bounden duty of all Christians, to hear their minister steadily and constantly, whenever it is practicable. A dark cloud, a slight fog, a little rain, a feeling of weariness, a fear of the heat, or a dread of the cold, should not be sufficient reason for you to discourage your minister by your non-attendance on the means of grace. You know you would not make such excuses if a party of friends were to be visited. Why then do you act so sinfully when God would have you go up to his house of prayer? We grant you there are reasons which may sometimes be given, as a *just cause* why you are absent from the means of grace. Sickness and delicate health will hinder some. Very young children will occasionally prevent others from being present. But no reason can be a *just* one, which would not be accounted sufficient to keep you from taking those pleasures during the week, which require similar efforts. Do not then, if you profess to regard your pastor with esteem, allow him to be vexed and disheartened, by seeing empty seats, and a thinly scattered congregation on "the Lord's Day."

A regular attendance on the preached Word is next to private prayer, and searching of the Scriptures, a chief means of improvement in the spiritual life. The honour and glory of God, the welfare and growth of the church, and our own Christian stability and advancement, and the minister's freshness and zeal, depend in no small measure on a steady and regular attendance on the Sabbath services. In ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, for those who absent themselves from God's house, no reason can be given which can be accounted sufficient by God, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit, by the angels, by good men, or even by men of the world, who possess a fair amount of common sense, and steadfast resolution.

One word to those who, while they are regular in their attendance at the sanctuary twice each Sabbath, are invariably absent at the *beginning* of the service; who never are present at the proper time unless it be purely by *mis-take*. We might excuse you coming late, if you did so but now and then, but seeing you are *always* behind hand, we must rebuke you sharply, and condemn your bad practice strongly. Your conduct is an offence against God. All relating to his worship should be to you of first importance. You rob God of that time which he has seen fit to set apart for his own worship. Your conduct is an offence against your fellow worshippers, who are disturbed by you when you hurry in, and push past them in their seats. Your conduct is an offence against yourself: for as Thomas missed the blessing, and fell into the sin of

unbelief because he was not with the disciples when Jesus came, so is it with you. Often when, had you been early at the sanctuary your souls would have been *refreshed*, because you were late they have been *lean and barren*. We commend to your notice the following "affectionate hint respecting public worship," from the pen of the late Rev. Joseph Irons:—

"The great Jehovah from his glorious throne,
Stoops down to make his love and mercy known;
And bids the chosen tribes of Israel meet,
Where he reveals the glories of his feet.

"He sends his heralds forth in Jesus' name,
To publish peace, and pardoning love proclaim:
Yea, he goes with them, and applies his word,
And makes it life, and health, and joy afford.

"Where then is that ungrateful sinner found,
Who slights and disregards the gospel sound?
Who when Jehovah in his courts draws near,
Neglects within those holy courts to appear.

"Can those who once have tasted Jesus' grace,
Choose to be absent when he shows his face?
Shall a few drops of rain, or dirty road,
Prevent their public intercourse with God?

"Shall gossip calls, or some inferior things,
Detain, when summon'd by the King of kings?
Blush, brethren, at the God insulting thought!
And prove in conduct you are better taught.

"Remember, every time the house of prayer
Is open for the saints, the Lord is there!
To hold communion with the heaven born race,
And give them, from his fulness, grace for grace.

"Let not such sacred seasons be forgot—
Say to each worldly care, "Detain me not!"
A feast is held, and I must share a part,
I'll not be robbed, nor grieve my pastor's heart.

"See! Satan's slaves to scenes of riot go,
By day or night, through rain or hail or snow
And shall some visitor, or worldly care,
Detain believers from the house of prayer?

"Forbid it Lord, revive thy people's zeal;
The lukewarm plague among thy children heal:
Ye heirs of bliss, whom Jesus often meets,
Whene'er his house is open, fill your seats.

"Jehovah loves the temples of his grace
More than the tents of all his chosen race:
Blest is the man whose seeking spirit waits
On all the means of grace in Zion's gates.

"Bear with me, while I say the crime is great
Of those who practice coming very late;
As if God's service were by far too long,
So they omit the first and closing song.

"Shall pew doors rattle, hats and patters move,
To show how you the service disapprove?
Disturbing those who come to praise the Lord,
And even while they listen to His word.

"A little less indulgence in the bed—
A little more contrivance in the head—
A little more devotion in the mind—
Would quite prevent you being so behind.

- " Suppose an earthly prince should condescend
To bid you to his banquet, as a friend,
Would you not try all means within your power,
To be in court at the appointed hour?
- " Shall such attention to a worm be given,
And be refused to the God of heaven?
Who can expect to be by Jesus blest,
If absent when he comes to meet his guests?
- " O, what a pleasing sight it would afford,
If, when the clerk says, "Let us praise the Lord,"
Each seat were occupied, and all the throng,
Were waiting to unite in their first song.
- " My brethren, this might mostly be the case,
If we were lively in the Christian race;
Then every hindrance would be laid aside,
To see and hear of Jesus crucified.
- " If you complain you have so far to come,
Set out a little sooner from your home;
But those who dwell hard by, have no excuse,
Except in idleness, or sleep, or use.
- " I grant, lest I should seem to be severe,
There are domestic cases here and there,
Age—illness—service—things quite unforeseen,
To censure which I surely do not mean.
- " But such will not (unless I greatly err)
Among the prudent very oft occur:
And when they do, you surely should endeavour,
To come at last, 'tis better late than never."

Obituary.

BRIEF MEMOIR OF THE REV. R. W. OVERBURY.

BY THE REV. JOHN STOCK, LL.D.

ANOTHER fast friend to the principles represented in the pages of this Magazine has fallen. On Friday, the 11th December, 1868, the town of Devonport was startled with the news that the Rev. R. W. Overbury had been suddenly called to his rest on the morning of that day. Our dear friend had not been well for several days before his decease, but had been able to attend to his ordinary duties up to the very last. On the Sabbath before, he had communed with the church at Morice Square, as usual, at the Lord's Supper. On the day immediately preceding his sudden death he had been very active in many ways, and closed the day by attending the recognition tea meeting, held in the Temperance Hall, Devonport, to commemorate the recent settlement of the Rev. Wm. Currie, as

pastor of the Princess Street Independent church. He took no active part in the proceedings, but entered into the spirit of them most heartily, and was very lively and animated in conversation. His friends little imagined that in a few hours he would be in eternity.

On returning to his home he did not complain of any special ailment, but partook of supper with appetite, retired to rest, and slept well. He slept rather longer than usual on the Friday morning, and when he awoke and was about to rise, he suddenly extended his arms in bed, and immediately expired, in the sole presence of his beloved wife. Death was instantaneous.

His mortal remains were buried in the Cemetery of the three towns on the morning of Thursday, the 17th

December, in the presence of many spectators.

His sudden and lamented death was improved by his pastor at Morice Square Chapel, on the morning of Lord's Day, the 20th December, when a large congregation assembled to testify their respect for the deceased. The text was taken from Gen. v. 24: "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." The preacher observed that these words were a brief but true biography of every departed saint, for of all the glorified it may be said,—they walked with God—they were not—for God took them. The sermon was an illustration of *The Believer's career*—He walks with God: of *The close of his journey*: He is not: and of *The glorious destiny to which the journey leads*; God takes him. At the close of the sermon the preacher read the following notice:—

"The Rev. H. W. Overbury was born 17th February, 1812, at Tetbury, in Gloucestershire. He was brought to a knowledge of the Saviour in very early life, and was baptised at Tetbury, in July of 1826, being then only fourteen years of age. From the Christian profession made thus early in life he never swerved, but was faithful unto death, and now wears the crown of glory. May many in this congregation imitate him not only in his early profession, but in the constancy of his love for Christ!

"Mr. Overbury began to preach the gospel while yet young, and finally was admitted a student at Stepney College, London, then under the presidency of Dr. Murch. After completing his college course he settled in the year 1833, at Eagle Street Chapel, London, as co-pastor with the venerable Joseph Ivimey; but in the following year, by the decease of Mr. Ivimey, Mr. Overbury became sole pastor. At Eagle Street, Mr. Overbury remained, in all, twenty years, and during this entire period, was the active friend of every society and movement that sought the extension of the Saviour's kingdom in the earth. During his London pastorate he became one of the founders of The Baptist Tract Society.

"On the 6th March, 1853, Mr. Overbury, became the pastor of the church in Morice Square Chapel, Devonport, which office he held until August 10th, 1856, when he took the charge of a new church formed on that day in Salem Chapel,

Morice Town, Devonport. Here our brother ministered for about three years. But increasing bodily weakness convinced him that he could not endure the labour connected with a stated pastorate; accordingly the church at Salem Chapel was dissolved, and most of the members returned to the mother church at Morice Square. Among those who did so was our dear departed friend. He and his beloved wife were received the second time into the church at Morice Square Chapel, on Lord's Day, September 4th, 1859. He came among us, as it has proved, to end his days in our midst.

"Of the particulars of his sudden death you are all aware. On the morning of Friday, the 11th December, 1868, the Master called our brother home to his rest. Mr. Overbury had slept well the night before, and was about to rise from bed, when in a moment the silver cord was loosed, and the golden bowl was broken. In the presence of his beloved wife alone the great change took place. Without a word, a groan, or a struggle, the ransomed spirit found itself absent from the body and present with the Lord. It departed, and was with Christ for ever.

"It was my privilege to be intimately acquainted with Mr. Overbury for more than thirty years. He heard some of the trial sermons which I preached when a youth of some twenty summers. He took a prominent part at my ordination over my first church at Chatham in 1842, and was the last left of the brethren who on that day conducted our solemnities. Little did we think then that I should ever become Mr. Overbury's pastor. But God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts!

"Of Mr. Overbury's Christian character I ever had the highest opinion. His kind and gentle spirit combined with a firm attachment to gospel truth and principle; his modesty and humility united to a courage which never shrank from a task to which obvious duty summoned; his charity and catholicity allied as they were with strength of personal convictions and firmness in carrying them out, contributed to form a character of no ordinary beauty.

"He loved the doctrines of the cross, and had no sympathy with modern broad church views. The theology of the Puritans, of Howe, and Owen, and Charnock, and Flavel, and Goodwin, and Sibbes, and Thomas Brooks, and Gurnall, was the theology that his soul loved. The attenuated divinity of the day, which is but Unitarianism veiled, he could not endure. Justification by the blood and righteousness

of Christ alone; and regeneration and sanctification by the sovereign grace of the Holy Spirit;—these were the two cardinal gospel truths on which he lived and rested. And these are the truths which I commend to every one as the only foundation laid in Zion for sinners to rely on for eternal life.

"As a citizen our friend had a heart which glowed with a patriotic ardour. He loved liberty, both civil and religious; liberty for himself, and for all mankind. He had the honour to be one of the founders of the Liberation Society, which seeks to destroy the golden fetters, with which the Episcopal church is bound to the State; and to the last, he was a generous and uncompromising supporter of that much abused but noble society. At a recent meeting held in this town, to sustain Mr. Gladstone's proposed Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Irish Church, our departed brother rendered good service, by his bold advocacy of that measure. It was his last great public testimony to the cause of religious equality. Our brother was not, however, a lover of political strife for its own sake; he never took a prominent position in such conflicts, except at the bidding of important principles, and then, always in the meek and gentle spirit of his Master.

"By his removal, the Baptist church meeting here has lost a liberal and sympathising supporter; and I have lost a friend in whom I could always safely trust, and whose judicious counsel I could always follow. We shall never again hear his earnest prayers for his fellow members and for his pastor, prayers which I always did my heart good to listen to. I shall miss his delicate respectful attention to my ministerial comfort and success. Never during the more than nine years that I sustained to him the relation of pastor, did he fail to treat me with the most courteous and deferential kindness, and this, though he was my senior in years and in ministerial experience, and was in many respects better qualified to be my teacher than I was to be

his. This was indeed but one illustration of his humble and modest spirit to which I have already referred.

"Our departed brother was an eminently devout man, and lived very near his Lord. Prayer was his delight. Any one from his prayers in public could tell that he was often with the Master in secret. He spent much of his time in communion with that Lord in whose presence he now realises his heaven. This was the true secret of his beauty and strength of his character: "*He walked with God,*" and in communion with his Eternal Father received the heavenly unction, which made his face to shine.

"The fellowship begun below is now perfected. He is with his Lord. He sees him as he is, and is like him. He is without fault before the throne. The blemishes of earth have all faded away before the assimilating radiance of his Lord's presence. His last sin has been committed and blotted out by his Saviour's blood. His last tear has been wept; his last burden has been borne; his last pain has been endured; and his last conflict has been fought. Death is no longer before him, as a cross to be taken up, but behind him, as a triumph achieved; and he simply waits for the consummation of the resurrection, to see death finally, and for ever swallowed up in victory. In all the future cycles of his being, he shall not know a grief or a death: for the Eternal God has dried up the fountain of tears, and the parent of death, in his nature. Henceforth his career shall be one uninterrupted progress onward and upward into closer communion with the fountain of life and joy. "He walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." Yes! God reached forth the arm of his love and power in that sudden death, and snatched him from the dangers and trials of mortality, that he might clasp his child more closely to his bosom, and that in that bosom, his child might nestle for eternity. Be it ours then to walk with God, so that when we cease to be here, it may be truly said of us, "God took them!"

Correspondence.

THE NEW TESTAMENT FOR SPAIN.
To the Editor of the *Primitive Church Magazine*.

DEAR SIR,—The Spanish New Testament of the American Bible Union, is precisely such a translation as is needed for circulation in Spain

at the present time. Both for fidelity, and its correct and pure Spanish, it commends itself to all who feel the importance of giving faithful versions of the word of God. The British and Foreign Bible Society has resolved "to print one million separate

gospels of Valera's version." Though this version is a protestant version, it is far from being so complete as that of the American Bible Union, and has "modes of expression which have ceased to be used by correct authors." Among the testimonies given to the excellence of the translation of the American Bible Union, are the following: "Your translation is perfectly clear, and intelligible; the grammar, and purity of the Castilian tongue are exactly observed in it." "Your translation I consider peculiarly adapted for circulation among Spaniards, because, being a literal translation, it will enable all those who search for truth—and there are many in Spain—to judge for themselves as to their other translations, and also because, not being made in a sectarian spirit, or with a view to favour peculiar tenets, it is not likely to create jealousy." A third person says: "I consider the translation of the Nuevo Pacto a great boon to the Spanish reading public; for not only do I consider the idiom well preserved throughout, but the style is lucid and easy of comprehension." Another person, a member of the Church of England, says: as to its fidelity to the Greek, "I feel no hesitation in expressing my opinion that your work bears every indication of your sincere and earnest desire to give a faithful representation of the original."

Mons. Nogaret, a protestant minister of Bayonne, in France, on the borders of Spain, lately wrote to London for copies of Nuevo Pacto. I had none to send him. In a note dated the 31st of last December, he said, "The Catholic versions are so unfaithful; and the protestant version of Valera is so ancient, that they correct this sometimes in reprinting it. And it appears to me, that it would be better to adopt a good version once for all."

The Baptist Tract Society has voted £20 towards a new edition of Nuevo Pacto. I have received from Thomas Ridgway, Esq., of Elm Lodge, Towcester, £13 3s. 0d. for the same purpose. Other friends have promised help, and more is needed, even to print a thousand copies. But it is hoped that more than sufficient for so limited a supply, will speedily be given. May God awaken a deep interest in this object. The degree of liberty recently established in Spain, makes the need of a new edition the more urgent. Contributions will be thankfully received by me at my present address, Combe Down, Bath. Post Office Orders may be made payable at Combe Down, Bath; or at Bath.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM NORTON,
Agent of the American Bible Union.

Poetry.

LYRICS FOR THE HEART.—"JERUSALEM THE HOLY."

BY W. POOLE DALFERN.

JERUSALEM the holy!

Blest city, pure and bright!
When shall these eyes behold thee,
Thy glories meet our sight?
Thy jasper walls and fountains,
And streets of shining gold,
Thy pearly gates and mountains,
So dearly loved of old.

Jerusalem the holy!

Bright city of our love,
When shall our eyes behold thee,
Clear shining from above?

When shall we cease our dreaming,
And seek to gaze on thee?
Thy beauty on us streaming,
Thou city of the free!

Jerusalem the holy!
Sweet day without a night,
When shall these eyes behold thee,
Thou city of delight!
Our fathers gaze upon thee,
Thy gates our children seek;
To thee the wise and holy,
Press on with pilgrim feet.

Jerusalem the holy!
One face we fain would see—
The Lamb of God most lowly;
We know He dwells in thee.
He gives thee all thy glory,
And all thy matchless grace,
The charm of gospel story,
Soft beaming in his face.

Jerusalem the holy!
Thy name our hearts inspires.
The home of all the lowly,
We long to hear thy choirs;
To see thy radiant glory,
To join thy blissful strains,
To hymn love's ancient story,
Where Jesus ever reigns.

Jerusalem the holy!
When shall our weary feet,
Have done with life's sad journey,
And all thy beauty greet?
When join the ransomed nation,
Which crowns each golden wall,
Exalting Christ's salvation,
Victorious over all?

WHAT CONSTITUTES A CHURCH?

WHAT constitutes a Church? Not turrets high,
And pointed spire, piercing the azure sky;
And pealing organ, and a choral throng,
Rolling grand music the groined roof along;
And well-clad audience, and preacher proud,
Charming, with eloquence of earth, the crowd.
But a united band of men sincere,
Who in their hearts have felt Jehovah's fear;
Who know their sins, by the Redeemer's blood,
For ever hidden from the sight of God;
Who to each other cleave for Jesu's sake,
And mutually of joys and cares partake;
Who, being filled with influence from above,
Show to the world how truly Christians love;
Where each endeavours, as his means permit,
To rescue others from the burning pit;
Where ordinances pure are rightly known,
And discipline impartially is shown;
Where a fond pastor feeds the flock of God,
And grateful people bear that pastor's load;

Where every member seeks the good of all,
And each would grieve to see a brother fall.
Such an assembly bears the stamp divine,—
Such is the Church that I would gladly join.

Braunston, Rugby.

J. W. COLE.

Page for the Young.

THE CANDY-DRAWER.

LITTLE Ruth was standing before her mother's bureau. One drawer was open; and, if you had looked in at the door just then, you would have seen Ruth holding a little square package in her hand, pinching and pressing it to see if it was hard or soft, and smelling it to see if it was good to eat; in short, wondering very much what was in the nice-looking parcel in her mother's drawer. The smelling test seemed to have a decided effect on Ruth.

She did not untie the cord which kept the contents from her sight. Oh, no! she would not be so naughty as that: she would only break the paper just the least bit at one corner, to see if it was really something as good as she guessed from that smell. Ah, yes! the little hole in the corner revealed a pretty red and-white stripe, shining like ice. It was hard too, and Ruth could not break it without tearing the paper too much; but she would just draw out the whole stick, and smooth over the broken paper, and it would never be missed. But the coveted stick of candy was scarcely transferred to her pocket before she thought, "I will just look once more, and see if there are any other kinds; there might be some sugar-plums or lemon-drops. I wouldn't take even one." So she took up the paper again; and, although she felt pretty sure she saw some pink sugar-plums, they were too far back to reach. The soft flat bar of white cream-candy, however, looked so very tempting, that the little fingers pinched off a small bit, and then Ruth shut the door very quick, and glided softly out into the open sunshine. Something within her seemed to speak to her,—"Ruth, Ruth!" At first she turned as if her mother was calling her: but no; it

was a voice within herself, and she listened: "Ruth, why did you take the candy slyly? Put back what you have, and go and tell your mother you broke the paper, and you are sorry." It was a kind voice, and a wise one; but Ruth said, "Oh, no! I could never do that. It was only a very little bit, never to be missed: and very likely my mother means it all for me, or at least half; for I am older than Willy." But conscience answered, "Very true; but is it right to take even a little bit without leave? It is a sin to steal a pin you know."

But Ruth laughed, and answered, "How foolish to call it stealing to take a morsel of candy from my own mother's drawer!"

Still the candy did not taste quite so sweet, as she drew it from her pocket and ate it hurriedly for fear of being seen, as it would have done if given her by her mother.

But, after all, it was quite a temptation to Ruth, as day after day passed, and nothing was said to her about the candy.

"Perhaps it wasn't for me, after all. I will look again, and see if it is still there." Stealing in gently, she opened the drawer; and, sure enough, in the same corner lay the little white package. "I will just taste one morsel of the candy." The morsel was so sweet, and melted away so soon in her mouth, that another and another bit was broken off, till the whole bar was gone! Ah! then the paper had fallen in a good deal!

"Stop now," said conscience, "and confess what you have been doing." But Ruth found it easier to slight conscience than resist candy: so once and again she visited the drawer, until the paper was more than half emptied, and she felt so very uneasy,

that, with the faint hope that she should never be questioned, she made a firm resolve not to go near it again.

"Ruth!" said a voice a little louder and more distinct than the other voice which she had not heeded. Ruth turned, and her mother stood before her, the torn paper of candy in her hand.

"Ruth, do you know who has done this?" The scarlet flush that spread over her face answered for her. She hung her head in silence.

"I am very sorry," felt in low, sad tones from her mother's lips. "I bought it for you and Willy, for your birthday. I was surprised to find it so, but could hardly think it was my little daughter. *I thought I could trust you always, Ruth.*"

Ah! those words, "I thought I could trust you always," and from her dear mother! Ruth's tears were falling fast. Her mother continued: "I shall keep this for Willy. I can not have the pleasure of giving you any. You have grieved me very much."

Ruth said nothing *then*. She was afraid her mother might not trust any hasty promise. But that afternoon she laid a little note in her mother's lap. It said, "I did not mean to take any candy when I first found the paper; and then I thought I would only taste the least bit. My conscience told me I was doing wrong. If I had listened to that, I would not have done so. If you will forgive me this once, you may 'always trust me' in the future."

Very sweet to Ruth was the kiss her mother silently pressed on her cheek; and her firm resolve to be worthy of being trusted, by always being strictly honest, which the grace of God enabled her ever after to be, was the result of her sad lesson at the candy-drawer. Ruth still lives. She has remembered that candy-package over twenty years, and has told you the story, that you may be led to listen carefully to conscience, and always run away from temptation before you take even one little look.

Mr. Geissler's Column.

SAXONY.

BELoved Mr. Shaw.—It was in the beginning of November when I sent in the last report, and if you allow, I now send you another one of my labours since that time.

Immediately after my last writing I was in Leipzig, where we had a conference of our Saxon brethren, on which occasion I preached on the subject of prayer and administered the ordinance. However happy we were as assembled under the Lord's blessing and protection, yet we had to mourn over the fact of another compulsory baptism, which had lately taken place in the kingdom. Our brother Fielder, to whom last summer a daughter was born, had been repeatedly not only summoned and told to bring his baby to the Lutheran clergy to get it christened, but was also punished with payments (fines) for not doing so. Since all this proved in vain there came at last, quite

unexpectedly, the burgomaster, his gensd'armes, and a midwife, and demanded the child; as the parents refused to give it to them one of the gensd'armes stepped forward and took it by force from the mother who pressed it to her bosom, he then gave it to the midwife, and so went off with it to the church, where the priest was already waiting for it. When he had sprinkled it in the presence of a crowd of people it was returned to the parents.

To write lamentations about such facts to the higher authorities, as I have done formerly is in vain; I now, after having lamented the case to the Lord Jesus, write plain articles about it to the daily newspapers, and thus try to get the public opinion against this tyranny of conscience, which seems to be of the most effect.

Lord's Day, November 8th, was again in Halle, having preached in the forenoon on the living church of

Christ, I conducted the school in the afternoon which continues to be well attended and seems to become increasingly a nursery for the church, we have even now several applications from it. Only with applications from children we feel induced to act according to the counsel of the town clerk at Ephesus—"do nothing rashly!" In the meeting after the school I preached on "the Love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." We considered this love, first in comparison with *all knowledge*, and found that however good and excellent true knowledge is, yet this love is greater, mightier, more important, more comprehensive, more precious, more inventive, more wonderful, more constant, and more desirable than all knowledge; second, in some pictures,—as the mighty *elements*. Fire (a fire which even the torrents of the malice of men, nor the floods of God's wrath could quench). Water (a mighty, all overflowing stream, and a quiet but bottomless ocean). Air (the soft zephyr and the mighty hurricane)! and earth (the highest mountains, whose top we cannot reach). After this service we celebrated the Lord's love and death in his Supper, and then held a church meeting in which we had the joy to receive two converts, whom I baptised that same night in the presence of friends and strangers. Several others are standing near and some have applied for baptism already.

A few days after this I had occasion to immerse another applicant, who came from Leipzig, and had been received for baptism when I was there. Then I went on a larger mission tour in the so called "Dogs Turkey," a large part of the Saxon Province. A brother, always desirous of doing something for the Lord, had before hand arranged for large meetings in no less than a dozen of places. I then had to travel on day by day either by dogs carriages or by foot, and for the course of two weeks I had each evening a gathering of several hundred souls. My constant anxiety and prayer to the Lord was that I might preach to these many and lost people the pure, simple, and full

gospel, just that which the Lord would have preached to them. And to the praise of our Lord who sends us, I can say that always, "at the time," he granted me what he promised, his spirit and his help. Omitting the details of the whole tour, let me only mention one case of the Lord's help in finding my way. One day I had to make the way to a town called Kemberg (near Wittenberg), famous through Luther) quite alone. Having walked about twelve miles I lost the right way, there being no regular ways in this sandy region, and unhappily it was now getting night. I then looked up to the Lord and asked his directions, and after a while I met a man in the darkness; at once I asked him for the nearest road to Kemberg. "There are no roads here," he said, "but you may come along with me, I am also going to Kemberg." "Very well," I said, "I shall be very happy to accompany you." "Have you not heard," he said, "there is to be an English Missionary to night in Kemberg, and I am just going to hear him?" "Excellent, I am just going to the same meeting." "I am wondering," said the man again, "what he will preach, a number of our people went already by daylight to the town, we heard that he preaches quite a new doctrine, and therefore I am going to hear him, for I am just on the point that I do not know what to believe, or if to believe anything at all." He seemed to be a seeking soul, and after I had left him to speak on religious matters as long as he liked, I told him my opinion and my experience in telling him my conversion. Explaining to him in our dialect the way of salvation as plainly as possible, we at last had arrived in the town where, by the light of the lanterns we now could see each other, and then, as we halted before the meeting hall he said, "Dear me, perhaps you are that missionary, who—?" We then went in, and that evening we had not only a gathering of nearly one thousand souls, who do not know what to believe, but also a very blessed meeting, which, I am sure, will bring eternal fruits.

On this journey I and the brother who for the most part was with me,

sold several Bibles and Testaments, and distributed a large number of tracts and good pamphlets. The Lord gave grace and joy and strength to sow the good seed richly, will you now help us to entreat him for the increase. Though it is sometimes weeping, and if not weeping, yet under difficulties and weariness, that we go and sow precious seed, still our hope is, we shall doubtless come some day rejoicing and bring many sheaves. May it all be done, the one and the other, to the honour of him who has sent us!

Amidst these labours I also, wrote

what seems to be much needed here, a short history of the Baptists and their church constitution, entitled—*"The Baptists: what they are, what they believe, and where they come from."* As soon as I find time I shall finish it for the press. But to-morrow I must be off for another journey.

Asking your continued prayers and sympathy for myself and the good work in Saxony, I ever am yours in the Lord Jesus.

MORITZ GRISSLER.

Halle, Dec. 11th, 1868.

Intelligence.

AMERICA.

[We have no doubt the following letter from Mr. Brown late, of Oswaldtwistle, in Lancashire, and formerly of Conlig Newtonards, in Ireland; will be read with interest.—ED.]

To the Editor of the *Primitive Church Magazine*.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—You will be glad to learn that I am now settled as pastor of a Christian church in the *New World*. We sailed from *Liverpool* by the "*City of Baltimore*," about the middle of April, and landed at *New York*, about the beginning of May. Our sea-voyage was not very pleasant. All the family were very sick, the whole time, except myself. I was not at all sick. This was a great mercy, as I was enabled to attend to the wants of the rest. We had about a thousand passengers on board. I endeavoured to read the Scriptures and pray twice every day in the steerage; but was frequently interrupted by profane, obscene, and threatening expressions from the *Roman Catholics*, who formed the large majority. On the Lord's Day, the captain kindly put up a notice that I would preach in the saloon, when, I suppose, all the *Protestants* on board attended.

On arriving at *New York* we were hospitably entertained by Mrs. Brown's Uncle, *Andrew Bowden, Esq.*, who is a good man, and an elder among the *Covenanters*. We were also courteously received by ministerial brethren.

At *Chicago*, we were introduced to *William Carson, Esq.*, nephew to the late Dr. Carson, of *Tubermore, Ireland*, who is also related to Mrs. Brown. He and his excellent wife treated us with much kindness. There we were also introduced to a gentleman from *Strawberry Point*, in the state of *Iowa*, who encouraged us to accompany him, as he said ministers were much required in *Iowa*, and he kindly promised to receive us into his house till we should get settled. We accepted his kind invitation. On arriving at the beautiful village of *Strawberry Point*, we learned that, as the Lord's Supper was to be dispensed in the "*Baptist Church*" on Sabbath, a "*Covenant Meeting*," would be held in the "church" on Saturday. We asked if we might attend, and were told in reply, that we should be very welcome, that there are no private church meetings in this country, that all the business is done in the face of the public, and that there ought to be no secrets in religion. On Saturday we were summoned by the "church bell" to the "*Covenant meeting*." The "*Covenant*" was read by the "elder,"—the people standing. It consisted in a solemn engagement to a series of duties, such as personal and family worship, the due observance of the Lord's Day, total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors, &c.; to which all the people subjoined an audible "*Amen*." This was followed by conference and prayer, in which

both men and women engaged: after which the benediction was pronounced. On the Lord's Day, the "elder" asked me to sit in the pulpit with him. At his request, I offered the first prayer, after which he preached an excellent sermon on the union of the Divine and human natures in the person of *Christ*. After leaving the pulpit, he requested me to sit besides him at the table, and having distributed the bread to the communicants, he requested me to distribute the "sacrament of the wine." In the evening I preached to a large congregation.

Having learned that the *Turkey River Association* was to meet in *West Union* on the following Friday, I attended as a visitor. At the business meeting several questions, relating to the interests of the denomination, were discussed, ministers of other denominations, taking part in the discussion, though the vote was confined to the members of the Association. At this meeting, I was recognised by the clerk, who informed me that the "elder" who had been appointed to preach declined, and that it was the general desire of the Association, that I should preach at Two o'clock, in the church where they were convened, and also on the Lord's Day, at half-past Ten, in the Presbyterian church. At the close of the afternoon service, the Secretary of the Baptist State Convention, greeted me very warmly, and said, "I thank God I have come to hear you preach to day. Your services will be much required in this country. You must visit the church in *Cascade*—you are just the man for that church." On the Lord's Day, the Presbyterian minister introduced me to his congregation, and prayed fervently that the Lord might guide and direct the measures of the Baptist Association now sitting in the town, for the promotion of His glory, and the extension of the Kingdom of Christ. In the course of a few days after this, I received an urgent request to supply the pulpit of the Baptist church at *Cascade*. The result was a call to the pastorate, which I accepted about three months ago. It seems a singular providence, that I should

have been appointed successor to our much esteemed brother, Mr. John Bates, who once laboured in *Bainbridge, Ireland*. Present prospects are good. We have 113 members. The congregation is very good—meeting house quite full. Mrs. Brown is much beloved, and very happy. The Lord has favoured us with good health. May He favour us with much success in winning souls to Christ.

Able and faithful labourers are much required in this part of our Lord's vineyard. There is much error to combat. *Romanism* abounds, and the amount of unsound doctrine among *Protestants* is very considerable. The *Universalists*, so called, because they believe in universal salvation, have a strong hold. *Presbyterians* are not very numerous. The *Methodists* are much more so. *Episcopalians* scarcely have a being. The views of the *Regular Baptists* are much the same as those of the venerable *Andrew Fuller*. The *Free-will Baptists* are *Arminians*, and practice open communion. The *Second Adventists*, believe in the personal reign of Christ, the sleep of the soul between death and the resurrection, and the annihilation of the wicked. The "Christians" are *Unitarians*, and they also practice open communion, though generally immersed. We have also a considerable number of *Campbellites*, and, strange to tell, they also to a certain extent practice open communion. In most of the Sects women are allowed to preach. One thing I much regret, and that is, *Orthodox* denominations are not sufficiently careful to mark the boundaries between truth and error. *Unitarians*, sometimes occupy the pulpits of the *Orthodox*. This is a kind of liberality that I deplore. May the time speedily come when the scattered sheep of Christ shall be gathered into one flock, when all the disciples of Jesus, shall be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment.—The Lord hasten it in His time.

Yours in Christian love,

JOHN BROWN.

*Cascade, Dubuque County,
Iowa, America, Nov. 23rd, 1868.*

STRICT BAPTIST MISSION.

THE committee of the "Strict Baptist Mission" have just issued a "Periodical Paper" containing the following particulars respecting their new missionary in India.

Cooposawmy Raw is by birth a Brahmin, the highest caste in India, and was born at Manargoady, in Tanjore, a place beyond all others noted for its wickedness and devotedness to idol worship,—two things which most frequently go together. Here he lived, an ungodly, idolatrous youth, until it pleased God to bring him, about five years ago, into connection with the Wesleyan Missionary Society's missionaries in the district where he resided. He now heard, for the first time, of the true God, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, and became, we believe, truly converted, not merely to a belief in the Christian religion, but to embrace Christ as his only hope as a guilty sinner before God. His parents were much enraged, and brought the Wesleyan missionaries before a court of law at Madras, as having influenced their son against them. But, as he was of full legal age to act for himself, the parents were defeated, and Cooposawmy left father and mother, and even his intended wife, (to whom he was betrothed when a child according to Hindoo custom), to join the Christians, whom all his friends and relatives hated. But this was not all. About a year ago, he was brought into contact with some of the Strict Baptists at Madras; and finding that the Wesleyan teaching respecting the doctrines of the gospel and the ordinance of baptism was not according to the Scriptures, he determined, by the help of God, that, as he left home and friends when a dark heathen, in order to follow the light of truth, so now he would follow the same light, and cast in his lot among the Strict Baptists, who he satisfied himself, taught and practised only what Christ had commanded. This resolve was not carried out without great opposition and reproach; but God supported him through it, and he was last year immersed on a profession of his faith at Madras, and joined the church at

Perambore, of which a highly beloved and esteemed native Baptist brother, Mr. Doss Anthravady, is the pastor. Here he was for a time employed by the railway company, but has now become one of our missionaries, having for his station the town of Perambore. His former friends, the Wesleyans, and his present pastor, Mr. Anthravady, both speak in the highest terms of his character and abilities. For himself he says, "From the beginning, my desire has been to consecrate my life to the service of the great King Jesus, preaching and teaching the gospel to my perishing fellow countrymen; consequently I shall only be too happy to become your missionary." Perambore, where Cooposawmy is appointed to labour, is in the midst of a thickly-populated district. "It abounds," says Mr. Doll, "in streets, bazaars, highways, villages, hamlets, railway-lines, and stations, workshops, military barracks, &c., &c., and is unoccupied by any other missionary." Here is, therefore, a wide field of usefulness. May God make it the scene of much spiritual instruction and saving power to the hearts of the dark heathen who reside in this locality.

Besides preaching and conversing with the natives, Cooposawmy has already a day and Sunday-school in operation. In a recent report he says: "Colonel Innis, of the 41st Native Infantry, kindly offered me his bungalow for a school, which we thankfully received,—a good help in a good time—for the building we engaged was unfit, and needs repair. The boys are increasing daily; I have now thirty-seven on the list. Scripture is the principal study. All the boys attend also the Sunday-school. The first and second classes repeat verses from the Psalms, which they commit to memory. The third and fourth classes are taught in Luke's Gospel in the vernacular. My wife teaches these two classes. After the Sunday-school, I give them a short address or interesting narrative, which they hear with great delight.

"Mrs. Colonel Innis visited the school yesterday morning, (July 14th), and examined the first class in arithmetic, &c. She was pleased with

their answers. May God grant his blessing on the feeble labours of this past month."

We are sure the young friends in our Sabbath-schools in England will be pleased to hear of this little Christian school established among the heathen at Perambore.

Besides regular preaching at Perambore, Coopoosawmy visits the villages around, where he is received kindly. "Seeming convinced," he says "that my object is to do them good, they do not oppose the truth, but would rather lose their souls than break caste. If Christianity would tolerate caste, they would at once profess Christianity." A service is also conducted amongst the Drummers of the Regiment stationed at Perambore, who, he says, attend cheerfully, and some of them manifest great seriousness. We subjoin the following extract from his journal of August last:—

"VILLAGE PREACHING.—On Monday morning, while I was going to Madavapoorani, I found a crowd of people passing on the road. On inquiry, I learned that they were returning from a feast at Pariapolliam, a village about twenty miles from Madras, northwards. I determined to preach to these ignorant and benighted people, Christ, the true way of salvation. Under a large shade, and near a small bridge, I read to those who collected about me, a portion of Scripture, and explained the folly of idolatry, and sinfulness of going to that feast. While explaining the true way of salvation, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the increasing multitude listened attentively, telling each other that what I say is nothing but true. But one of them, who was partly drunk, broke out with all sorts of bad language, and attempted to beat me, and seemed as if he would have put me to death; for he seemed to be so full of rage; but I entrusted myself in the hands of Him that sent me to proclaim his holy name. The drunken man followed me till I reached home, with abuses and threats."

The day and Sunday-schools appear to be attended with pleasing results, as the following extracts from his September journal testify.

"DAY SCHOOL.—This work is sweet to me, and Sunday-school work sweeter; and if Narrainsawmy, Soobamany, and Codandapa are converted and baptised, it will be

sweeter still. These boys show an abhorrence to the worship of idols, and the superstitious ways of their heathen parents; they show a desire to become Christians, and they shed tears while I tell them of the dying love of Jesus. May they be brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of Christ's gospel.

"SUNDAY SCHOOL.—The boys seem to like the Sunday-school better than the day school. The first and second classes are taught by me, the third and fourth classes by my wife."

We are sorry to say that the school has been diminished by Colonel Innis leaving the district with his native regiment. We will, in some future number, give further particulars of other Missionary work carried on by this Mission in other parts of India and Ceylon. G. P.

BAPTISTS AT WARRINGTON.

SOME seven years since the Baptist chapel, Golbourne-street, Warrington, being closed as the proprietor wanted to sell, and the few friends worshipping there were not in a position to buy—our esteemed friend Mr. Samuel Howorth, of Waterbarn, came over, and would have purchased the chapel, but it having being built by the Independents for their use, and the person who then claimed not being able to give any satisfactory title the attempt was abandoned, consequently we were turned out, not having been able to get a suitable place to meet in. We have been tossed about ever since. Some meeting with other denominations and some joining the church at Latchford.

During that time, attempts have been made to form another interest, but have always failed through not having a suitable place to meet in. That difficulty can be removed at once. A kind Providence which always watches over his people has put in our way the desired object. Through the kindness of an esteemed brother in the ministry, we have had offered to us a neat iron chapel to seat 150 people. The removing and fitting up is not expected to exceed £100. We have in dependence on our covenant God, purchased the same. We ask the sympathy and support of your readers, to whom the Lord has

given this world's goods to render a little help. The following sums have been promised.

	£	s.	d.
Mr. and Mrs. Hall will fit up the interior of the building with seats, &c.			
Mr. Joseph Knowles, sen.	5	0	0
Mr. James Knowles.....	3	0	0
Mr. Isaac Kenworthy	2	0	0
Rev. Joseph Harvey.....	5	0	0
Mr. Roger Rate	2	0	0
Samuel Rigby, Esq.....	5	0	0
A Friend	1	0	0

Subscriptions will be received by the Rev. Joseph Harvey, Baptist minister, 23, Parsons Lane, Bury, Lancashire, or by Mr. J. Kenworthy, Mersey View, Latchford, near Warrington, and acknowledged in the Primitive Church Magazine.

SHIPLEY BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL.

THE annual tea meeting of the teachers and friends of the above school was held on December 25th, when 243 persons met in the school room, which was decorated with evergreens, and ornamented with mottoes expressive of earnest desire for the extension of the kingdom of Christ. At the public meeting, after tea, the chair was taken by Mr. E. Cossey, the newly elected pastor of the church, and several addresses were given by various brethren, who were listened to with great attention. Our school is in a promising state, but still we have much to desire. A good feeling exists between the school and the church, and between the teachers and scholars, and in this we do rejoice.

During the year, we have had our trials; we have lost two devoted teachers by death, to them our loss is gain; they rest, but we are still left to wage war with sin, and to labour for the Lord. The New Year has brought us new responsibilities, but our eyes are up unto Him from whom help cometh; and before this new year becomes old, we hope to tell of souls won for Christ, for "the Lord of Hosts is with us," and all our trust is in Him.

BAPTISMS.

BACUP, ZION CHAPEL.—On Lord's Day, December 27th, 1868, six females, and one male, all from the Sabbath School, were baptised on a profession of faith by our Pastor, Mr. Davies. Several more we believe are anxiously concerned to follow the same example.

KILMARNOCK.—Three, by Rev. E. J. Stobo, on December 20th; one of them, that of an old woman nearly three score, who sought to close the old year and begin the new one in obedience to God.

DEATHS.

January 4th, Jane, the beloved and only daughter of John and Sarah Bowker, of Folly Terrace, near Crawshawbooth, aged two years, and was interred at the Baptist chapel, Sunnyside, on the 9th, by the Rev. A. Nichols, assisted by the Rev. T. Evans, Sunnyside, near Rawtenstall, Lancashire.

"When children twine around the heart,
Experience best can tell
How hard, how very hard to part,
And bid the long farewell."

When David's little one was dead, he said, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. xii. 23). When the Shunammite's son was dead, and the question was asked, "Is it well with the child?" she answered "It is well" (3 Kings iv. 26). And, when young children were brought to Jesus, he said, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."—"And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." (Mark x. 15, 16).

"I take these little lambs," said he,
'And lay them on my breast;
Protection they shall find in me,
In me be ever blest.

Death may the bonds of life unloose,
But can't dissolve my love;
Millions of infant souls comprise
The family above.'

His words the happy parents hear,
And shout with joys divine;

'Dear Saviour, all we have and are,
Shall be for ever thine."

NOVEMBER 21st, 1868, after a long and painful affliction, Sarah, the beloved wife of Mr. Simeon Kay, of Bedale, aged 67 years. Mrs. Kay had for many years been a member of the